

Good afternoon, Chair Reynolds and Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf and the members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Estefania Cullen, from Eugene where I work at Relief Nursery as a supervisor.

I support House Bill 2504.

In my own experience, getting credentials through the ORO system has been very challenging. I studied in Spain, where I earned a bachelor's degree in fine arts with a minor in early education. Trying to get my previous studies validated was such a challenging and discouraging process that I chose not pursue this option, and instead decided it was easier to go back to school.

I would like the state to work toward a system that acknowledges and recognizes the knowledge of passionate early education teachers who have chosen to make Oregon their home. All teachers should have equal access to recognition for their education, regardless of where they studied. Our current system places an undue burden on those of us who moved here from another country.

I urge you to support people like me, early learning professionals, who care deeply about children and families in this state. Please support HB 2504.

Thank you.